

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY
(Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

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Applicant's or agent's file reference INT03122N	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Form PCT/IPEA/416	
International application No. PCT/NO2003/000188	International filing date (day/month/year) 10.06.2003	Priority date (day/month/year) 25.06.2002
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC F17C3/00, F17C1/04		
Applicant STATOIL ASA et al		

1. This report is the international preliminary examination report, established by this International Preliminary Examining Authority under Article 35 and transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.
2. This REPORT consists of a total of 5 sheets, including this cover sheet.
3. This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, comprising:
 - a. ☐ (sent to the applicant and to the International Bureau) a total of _____ sheets, as follows:
 - ☐ sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis of this report and/or sheets containing rectifications authorized by this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions).
 - ☐ sheets which supersede earlier sheets, but which this Authority considers contain an amendment that goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, as indicated in item 4 of Box No. I and the Supplemental Box.
 - b. ☐ (sent to the International Bureau only) a total of (indicate type and number of electronic carrier(s)) _____, containing a sequence listing and/or tables related thereto, in computer readable form only, as indicated in the Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing (see Section 802 of the Administrative Instructions).
4. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Box No. I	Basis of the report
<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. II	Priority
<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. III	Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. IV	Lack of unity of invention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Box No. V	Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VI	Certain documents cited
<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VII	Certain defects in the international application
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VIII	Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 08.01.2004	Date of completion of this report 11.08.2004
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/SE Patent- och registreringsverket Box 5055 S-102 42 STOCKHOLM Facsimile No. +46 8 667 72 88	Authorized officer Anna Salomonsson / JA A Telephone No. +46 8 782 25 00

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.

PCT/NO2003/000188

Box No. I Basis of the report

1. With regard to the language, this report is based on the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

- ☐ This report is based on a translation from the original language into the following language _____, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of:
- ☐ international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b))
 - ☐ publication of the international application (under Rule 12.4)
 - ☐ international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3)

2. With regard to the elements of the international application, this report is based on *(replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report)*:

- ☒ the international application as originally filed/furnished
- ☐ the description:
- pages _____ as originally filed/furnished
- pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____
- pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____
- ☐ the claims:
- pages _____ as originally filed/furnished
- pages* _____ as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19
- pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____
- pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____
- ☐ the drawings:
- pages _____ as originally filed/furnished
- pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____
- pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____
- ☐ a sequence listing and/or any related table(s) – see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing.

3. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages _____
- ☐ the claims, Nos. _____
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/figs _____
- ☐ the sequence listing (*specify*): _____
- ☐ any table(s) related to the sequence listing (*specify*): _____

4. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments annexed to this report and listed below had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).

- ☐ the description, pages _____
- ☐ the claims, Nos. _____
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/figs _____
- ☐ the sequence listing (*specify*): _____
- ☐ any table(s) related to the sequence listing (*specify*): _____

* If item 4 applies, some or all of those sheets may be marked "superseded."

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.

PCT/NO2003/000188

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims	<u>5-14, 16-18</u>	YES
	Claims	<u>1-4, 15</u>	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims	<u>9-11, 16-18</u>	YES
	Claims	<u>1-8, 12-15</u>	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims	<u>1-18</u>	YES
	Claims		NO

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7)

Documents cited in the International Search Report:

D1: GB, A, 1341892

D2: FR, A1, 2349099

Document D1 discloses a liquefied gas storage tank, e.g. for natural gas, O₂, N₂. The storage tank has a base plate (16), a vertical wall (12) and an upper top (14). The vertical wall comprises an inner wall (30) and an outer wall (50), both made of prestressed concrete and a steel liner (36) surrounds the outer surface of the inner wall.

Document D2 discloses a storage tank used for storage of liquefied gas. The storage tank comprises a self-supporting inner wall (1) of e.g. Ni-steel, and there is an outer gastight casing (2), with cylindrical side walls and a domed top, made of reinforced concrete. Between the inner and the outer wall, there is a metallic liner (4) made of joined and welded metal plates (27).

The tank according to claims 1-4 and the method according to claim 15 do not differ from the storage tank disclosed in D1. The tank according to claims 1-4 and the method according to claim 15 are therefore not novel and are not considered to involve an inventive step.

The tank according to claims 5 and 7 differs from the tank disclosed in D1, in that the intermediate fluid tight barrier is made of joined and welded metal plates. This is, however, disclosed in document D2. It would be obvious to a person skilled in the art to apply the features known from D2 to a

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Supplemental Box

In case the space in any of the preceding boxes is not sufficient.

Continuation of: BOX V

storage tank according to D1, thereby arriving at a tank according to claims 5 and 7. Therefore, the subject matter of claims 5 and 7 does not involve an inventive step.

Claims 6 and 8 merely describe two of several straightforward possibilities from which the skilled person would select, without the exercise of inventive skill, in order to join the metal plates. Consequently, the subject matter of claims 6 and 8 is not considered to involve an inventive step.

In claims 12-14, slight constructional changes in the tank of claims 1-3 are defined, which come within the scope of the customary practice followed by persons skilled in the art, especially as no unexpected technical effect has been achieved. Consequently, the subject matter of claims 12-14 also lacks an inventive step.

The invention is industrially applicable.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

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Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

The following observations on the clarity of the claims, description, and drawings or on the question whether the claims are fully supported by the description, are made:

Claim 8 is wrongly subordinated to claim 9. Claim 9 is wrongly subordinated to claim 9.